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Letter dated 27 January 2014 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the fourth monthly report of the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) (see annex). The present letter provides information requested in that resolution on the activities of the United Nations that took place from 21 December 2013 to 20 January 2014 related to the implementation of the resolution.

Introduction

As you will recall, the OPCW Executive Council set an intermediate milestone of 31 December 2013 for the removal of the most critical chemical weapons precursor, binary and end-state materials from the Syrian Arab Republic for destruction outside the country. In the months leading to the milestone, a significant international effort was made to procure, collect and deliver materials and equipment requested by the Syrian Arab Republic for in-country packaging, loading and transportation from the chemical weapons material storage sites to the port of Latakia. This effort continued during the current reporting period.

However, several factors, including various logistical and technical issues, as well as the continuing volatile security situation inside the Syrian Arab Republic, have affected timelines. As a result, the intermediate milestone of 31 December 2013 was not met by the Syrian Arab Republic. Nevertheless, the removal of chemical weapons material from the Syrian Arab Republic did commence on 7 January 2014, when a first quantity of priority chemical materials was moved from storage sites to the port of Latakia and subsequently loaded onto a cargo vessel of the multinational maritime transport operation. This, however, has not yet been followed by the movement of material to the port for onward transportation and destruction.

To promote the continuous movement of material to the port of Latakia, the Special Coordinator of the OPCW-United Nations Joint Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic continued concerted engagement with the Syrian Arab Republic and Member States, including those with influence over parties to the ongoing conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic. During the reporting period, she visited countries in the region to ensure continued support of international efforts regarding the elimination of the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic.

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The Joint Mission continues to work for the elimination of chemical weapons inside the Syrian Arab Republic, in security conditions characterized by ongoing heavy conflict, including in the area north-east of Damascus. While the security of the Joint Mission ultimately remains the responsibility of the Syrian Arab Republic, the Joint Mission continuously assesses the security situation to identify threats and mitigate risks. During recent weeks, the Joint Mission has received reports of direct threats against it. In response, it has continued to reinforce its safety and security procedures and has introduced additional security measures for all staff.

The United Nations and OPCW continue their efforts to conclude the tripartite status-of-mission agreement with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with paragraph 9 of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013).

Phase II and III activities

As demonstrated in the report of the Director-General of OPCW, and despite the progress already achieved, the volatile security situation impeded the Joint Mission from carrying out phase II verification activities during the reporting period.

Regarding phase III activities, the Joint Mission continued to work with Member States to ensure the rapid delivery and handover of packaging and handling materials to the Syrian Arab Republic. As a result, the majority of logistical requirements for in-country transportation have now been transferred to the Syrian Arab Republic. During the reporting period, the Syrian Arab Republic pre-positioned a portion of this packaging and handling material at various storage sites so that the chemical weapons materials could be packaged and loaded before being transported to the port of Latakia. The Joint Mission continues to encourage the Syrian Arab Republic to pre-position all material and equipment at relevant sites and to commence packing and preparing chemical materials for transport at the earliest opportunity.

In preparation for the arrival of chemical weapons material at the port of Latakia, the Joint Mission reinforced its presence there in late December 2013. The Joint Mission has worked with the civilian port authorities on location to enhance emergency response capabilities and preparedness to receive chemical weapons material. The Syrian Arab Republic has taken steps to upgrade its operations in this regard, and the Joint Mission has indicated that additional measures remain necessary to further mitigate risks at the port.

On 27 December 2013, the Russian Federation hosted a meeting in Moscow which led to the establishment of an integrated operational plan to manage and coordinate the contributions of China, Denmark, Norway and the Russian Federation. The participating Member States, together with the United Nations and OPCW, have worked to enhance procedures and communications in accordance with the arrangements agreed upon at the Moscow meeting. The Joint Mission continues to facilitate information-sharing and coordination as needed. The United Nations and OPCW successfully concluded an exchange of letters with the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on 5 and 6 January 2014 concerning the multinational maritime transport operation.

On 7 January 2014, the Syrian Arab Republic moved an initial quantity of priority chemical weapons material from two sites in the area of Homs to the port of

Latakia. The material was processed in the port and loaded onto a Danish cargo vessel. During the operation, Joint Mission personnel conducted verification activities at the sites in the Homs loading area and again prior to boarding at the port of Latakia. The vessel subsequently left the port with its cargo on board, accompanied by a naval escort from participating Member States.

Since then however, there have been no further movements of chemical weapons material and the vessels remain positioned outside Syrian territorial waters while waiting for chemical weapons material from the storage sites to arrive at the port of Latakia. Syrian authorities have reiterated that they require certain security assets which they consider to be essential for the safety of convoys. While I am conscious of the security situation on the ground in the Syrian Arab Republic, I am concerned that more movements have not taken place.

As part of this process, and in line with my letter to the Security Council dated 7 October 2013 (S/2013/591), the Joint Mission has continued to be in contact with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) in an effort to provide advice to the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic on the mitigation of environmental and public health risks. UNEP concluded an initial advisory report on a strategy for environmental risk reduction during the transport and storage of chemical weapons materials. This report has been made available to the Syrian Arab Republic. UNEP has also assisted the Joint Mission in reaching out to environmental non-governmental organizations. UNEP has deployed a second expert to provide advice to the Syrian Arab Republic.

WHO has provided advice to the Syrian Arab Republic on the mitigation and management of public health risks related to the process of transporting chemical weapons materials. It has provided technical guidance materials to relevant government ministries regarding mitigation measures and emergency contingency plans. It has also conducted training workshops with emergency physicians focused on clinical diagnosis, triage, decontamination, nerve agents, blister agents and toxic industrial chemicals.

Conclusion

Over the past two months, significant quantities of material and equipment have generously been provided by the international community to assist the Syrian Arab Republic in implementing its obligations under resolution 2118 (2013) and OPCW Executive Council decisions. A significant maritime presence has also been deployed in the eastern Mediterranean. These actions have been carried out at great expense, with impressive cooperation and considerable speed by the international community.

However, the 31 December 2013 deadline for the removal of all priority chemical weapons material was not met, and the 5 February 2014 deadline to remove other chemical materials is imminent. While remaining aware of the challenging security situation inside the Syrian Arab Republic, it is the assessment of the Joint Mission that the Syrian Arab Republic has sufficient material and equipment to carry out multiple ground movements to ensure the expeditious removal of chemical weapons material. Since only one movement has been conducted, representing a small quantity of priority chemicals, the operation to eliminate the Syrian chemical weapons programme is now behind schedule.

In recent days, I have spoken to the Syrian Arab Republic and other Member States concerned to express my concern regarding this delay. The Director-General of OPCW and the Special Coordinator have similarly engaged senior Syrian representatives to persuade them to enable immediate removal.

The delay is not insurmountable. The 30 June 2014 deadline is still five months away. However, it is imperative that the Syrian Arab Republic now examine the situation, intensify its efforts to expedite in-country movements of chemical weapons material and continue to meet its obligations under resolution 2118 (2013) and OPCW Executive Council decisions.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Member States that have made available considerable assets and have done so much to advance the process of eliminating the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic. The operation remains a significant international effort that requires a great deal of coordination and facilitation.

The Special Coordinator remains in regular contact with the Director-General of OPCW and myself to ensure that our two headquarters are fully apprised of the evolving situation. I am aware of the challenges involved and the Joint Mission continues to operate under hazardous and difficult conditions inside the Syrian Arab Republic. The continuing volatility and unpredictable operating environment has a direct impact on the achievement of the Joint Mission's mandate. While the Joint Mission is continuing to do everything possible to achieve its mandated tasks, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Syrian Arab Republic to ensure the removal and destruction of its chemical weapons programme in a timely and safe manner. I call on the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to continue to fulfil its obligations in this regard.

Annex

Letter dated 24 January 2014 from the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you my report entitled "Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme", prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), both dated 27 September 2013, for transmission to the Security Council (see enclosure). My report covers the period from 23 December 2013 to 22 January 2014 and also covers the reporting requirements set out in OPCW Executive Council decision EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013.

(*Signed*) Ahmet **Üzümcü**

Enclosure

Note by the Director-General

Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2(f) of the decision by the Executive Council (hereinafter the "Council") at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") reports to the Council on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of that decision. In accordance with paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the report by the Secretariat is also submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General. This is the fourth such monthly report.[1]

2. The Council, at its Thirty-Fourth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons and Syrian Chemical Weapons Production Facilities" (EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013). In paragraph 22 of this decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat should report on its implementation "in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2(f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1".

3. This report is therefore submitted in accordance with both above-mentioned Council decisions and includes information relevant to their implementation during the period from 23 December 2013 to 22 January 2014.

Progress achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting the requirements of EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1

4. In accordance with subparagraph 1(c) of EC-M-33/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic is required to complete the elimination of all chemical weapons material and equipment in the first half of 2014. Paragraphs 2 and 3 of EC-M-34/DEC.1 establish intermediate completion dates for the removal and destruction of Syrian chemical weapons prior to their complete elimination in the first half of 2014. Progress achieved within the reporting period by the Syrian Arab Republic in fulfilling these obligations is described below:

(a) Pursuant to subparagraph 2(a)(ii) of EC-M-34.DEC.1, all chemicals listed in that subparagraph were due to have been removed from the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic by 31 December 2013. As reported by the Director-General in his report to the Council (EC-M-37/DG.2, dated 7 January 2014), this objective could not be met for reasons of a technical nature, described in that report. However, on 7 January 2014, a limited quantity of priority chemicals was transported to the port of embarkation at Latakia and loaded onto a Danish cargo ship;

(b) As reported by the Syrian Arab Republic, a portion of the material and equipment provided by several States Parties for packaging and loading of chemical weapons has been pre-positioned at storage sites. Details are currently not available.

[1] The three previous reports are: EC-M-34/DG.1, dated 25 October 2013; EC-M-35/DG.1, dated 25 November 2013; and EC-M-37/DG.1, dated 23 December 2013.

As at the cut-off date for this report, the majority of logistical assets required for in-country transportation had been transferred to the Syrian Arab Republic;

(c) Pursuant to paragraph 9 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic was required to submit, not later than 1 January 2014, for review by the Council not later than 15 January 2014, its plan for destroying, on its territory, isopropanol and residual mustard agent in containers previously containing mustard agent. As previously reported, an initial version of this plan was submitted on 16 December 2013. A modified version was submitted on 16 January 2014 (EC-M-38/P/NAT.1, dated 14 January 2014);

(d) Pursuant to paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, the Syrian Arab Republic is required to submit a monthly report to the Council regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs). The second such report was submitted to the Secretariat on 16 January 2014 (EC-M-38/P/NAT.2, dated 16 January 2014) together with an amendment to the initial declaration, providing information regarding destroyed production equipment and updated information regarding the total number of empty HD containers; and

(e) In accordance with subparagraph 1(e) of EC-M-33/DEC.1 and paragraph 7 of resolution 2118 (2013), the Syrian Arab Republic shall cooperate fully with all aspects of the implementation of the decision and the resolution. The Syrian authorities have continued to extend the necessary cooperation to the OPCW-UN Joint Mission in the Syrian Arab Republic (hereinafter "the Joint Mission") in the conduct of its activities during the reporting period. The Director-General has urged the Syrian authorities to provide a time frame for the removal of the remaining priority chemicals from the Syrian Arab Republic.

Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic

5. Effective cooperation with the United Nations in the context of the Joint Mission has continued with close coordination between the two organisations and between the offices in New York, The Hague, Cyprus, and Damascus. As at the cut-off date of this report 16 OPCW staff members were deployed with the Joint Mission in Damascus and Latakia, and one logistics officer in Beirut.

6. The Director-General has spoken regularly with the Special Coordinator of the Joint Mission, Ms Sigrid Kaag, who briefed States Parties at OPCW Headquarters on 7 January 2014. The Director-General has continued to meet with senior representatives of the States Parties offering to host a destruction facility or otherwise providing assistance with transport or destruction, and to communicate regularly with senior officials from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. On 15 January 2014, the Director-General met with a visiting delegation from the Syrian Arab Republic. On 16 January 2014, the Director-General briefed a joint meeting of Italian parliamentary committees in Rome on the progress of the mission so far and on plans for the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. The Secretariat has continued to provide weekly information briefings to States Parties in The Hague.

7. On 5 and 6 January 2014, the Joint Mission oversaw the packing and loading of the chemicals at the storage sites, prior to their transportation to the port of embarkation at Latakia, where verification activities were performed. At the storage

sites, activities included verifying the chemicals against the initial declaration, taking an inventory of the chemicals loaded into each shipping container, conducting sampling on a random basis, and sealing the containers. Upon the arrival of the containers at Latakia on 7 January 2014, the inventory documents for each shipping container were checked, the integrity of the seals was confirmed and the contents of the containers were verified on a random basis. Paperwork between the Syrian shipping company and the Danish authorities was completed and, after screening by Danish customs, the containers were securely loaded on board the Danish cargo ship. The ship returned to international waters, where, along with the Norwegian cargo ship and the naval escorts, it will await further deliveries of chemicals to Latakia.

8. As required by paragraph 8 of EC-M-36/DEC.2, dated 17 December 2013, the Director-General submitted a report to the Council (EC-M-37/DG.2) on the implementation of the plan for the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons outside the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic. In the report, the Director-General described the procurement of equipment and vehicles to enable the transportation of Syrian chemical weapons to the port of embarkation at Latakia. At its Thirty-Seventh Meeting, on 8 January 2014, the Council noted the report by the Director-General (paragraph 4.2 of EC-M-37/2, dated 8 January 2014).

9. From 26 December 2013 to 2 January 2014, an OPCW inspection team was in the United States of America for training in preparation for conducting verification activities on board the MV Cape Ray. Another team of OPCW personnel departed from The Hague on 14 January 2014 to conduct a final engineering review of the chemical weapons destruction facility (CWDF) on board the MV Cape Ray, which is set to sail soon. At its Thirty-Seventh Meeting, the Council considered and approved an agreed detailed plan and a facility agreement for verification of the destruction of chemical weapons for the CWDF aboard the MV Cape Ray (EC-M-37/DEC.1 and EC-M-37/DEC.2, both dated 8 January 2014).

10. On 16 and 17 January 2014, the Secretariat hosted technical discussions between experts from the Russian Federation, the Syrian Arab Republic, and the United States of America to further discuss modalities for the destruction of 12 declared CWPFs in the Syrian Arab Republic. A follow-on meeting may be held during the first week of February 2014.

11. On 20 January 2014, the Secretariat hosted the public opening of the tenders submitted in response to the "Call for Proposals for the Treatment and Disposal of Chemicals, Effluents, and Related Packaging Materials with Respect to the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons" (EC-M-36/DG.4, dated 16 December 2013). By the deadline of 19 January 2014, tenders had been received from 14 companies for the destruction of Syrian priority chemicals and effluent from the neutralisation of such chemicals at commercial facilities outside the Syrian Arab Republic. The bids will now be subjected to technical and commercial evaluation and the winners will be announced in early February 2014.

12. Consultations have continued on a model facility agreement for verification activities at the commercial facilities referred to in paragraph 11 above or sponsored by States Parties pursuant to paragraph 7 of decision EC-M-36/DEC.2. A new version of the model facility agreement will be submitted to the Council for approval at its Thirty-Eighth Meeting.

13. As reported previously, the Secretariat, as required by paragraph 13 of EC-M-34/DEC.1, has developed a draft facility agreement for Syrian chemical weapons storage facilities and submitted the draft to the Syrian National Authority for review and finalisation.

Supplementary resources

14. As reported in the previous monthly report, several States Parties are assisting in the transportation, removal, and destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. During the current reporting period, the following additional assistance has been provided:

(a) The Russian Federation has airlifted 50 Kamaz trucks and 25 Ural armoured trucks to the Syrian Arab Republic to assist in the transportation of the priority chemicals. The Russian Federation is also providing additional naval escorts for the Danish and Norwegian cargo ships;

(b) China has made available a naval vessel to provide security for the Danish and Norwegian cargo vessels;

(c) Belarus has provided 13 field kitchens, which were transported to the Syrian Arab Republic on 30 December 2013 by an aircraft from the Russian Federation;

(d) On 9 January 2014, the German Government announced that, through an in-kind contribution, it would destroy approximately 370 metric tonnes of effluent created on board the MV Cape Ray during the destruction of mustard agent;

(e) On 13 January 2014, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland announced that, following a request from the United States of America, it would provide equipment to support the process of neutralisation of chemical warfare agents aboard the MV Cape Ray. The Government of the United Kingdom also announced that it was sending a naval vessel to join those from Denmark and Norway in providing security for the Danish and Norwegian cargo ships in international waters; and

(f) On 16 January 2014, the Italian Government announced that the transloading of chemicals from the Danish and Norwegian cargo ships to the MV Cape Ray would take place at the port of Gioia Tauro in southern Italy. An exchange of letters has been finalised between the OPCW and the Government of Italy aimed at facilitating the access of OPCW inspectors to the relevant port facilities on Italian territory for carrying out verification activities with respect to Syrian chemical weapons, and at granting them the necessary privileges and immunities.

15. As at the cut-off date of this report, the balance in the Special Trust Fund for the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons stood at EUR 13.05 million. Contributions have been received from the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. This includes the contributions that were originally made to the first OPCW Trust Fund for Syria and which have, at the request of the donor, subsequently been transferred, in part or in whole, to the Special Trust Fund for Destruction. Further contributions of EUR 2 million and approximately EUR 350,000 are expected from Italy and the Republic of Korea respectively. In addition, Australia has decided to contribute approximately EUR 1.3 million, the

European Union EUR 12 million, India EUR 736,000, and the Japanese Government has decided, subject to parliamentary approval, to contribute EUR 4.91 million.

Conclusion

16. Following the removal of a part of the priority chemicals on 7 January 2014, there had not been any further movement of chemicals as at the cut-off date of this report. On 14 January 2014, the Director-General wrote to the Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister and Head of the National Authority, Mr Faisal Mekdad, mentioning his reporting obligations to the Council, the substantial expense being borne by Denmark and Norway with regard to the cargo ships, and the potential risks in relation to the commercial tendering process posed by the delay. The Director-General also discussed the matter with a visiting Syrian delegation on 15 January 2014, emphasising the need for a time frame for the removal of the remaining priority chemicals. The Director-General spoke to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 18 January 2014 and they both agreed that it was necessary for the removal process to pick up pace.

17. On its part, the Syrian Arab Republic has emphasised that it considers security of the materials in transport to be of paramount importance. In written communications, it has mentioned information about certain security threats. The Syrian Arab Republic has also emphasised the need for certain security-related equipment that it considers necessary, and has informed the Secretariat that a process has been initiated to procure 10 armoured jackets for the maritime shipping containers for use in the transportation of certain liquid priority chemicals. Firm details of the time frame for this process are pending.

18. In response to the Director-General's letter of 14 January, a communication dated 20 January has been received from the Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister. He has, inter alia, reaffirmed a commitment to completing the removal of chemicals from the Syrian Arab Republic as soon as possible; stated that the difficult and complex security situation now prevailing in the Syrian Arab Republic has contributed to a delay in completing the task; mentioned the specific nature of threats to the mission; and expressed the hope that the current difficult circumstances in the Syrian Arab Republic will be taken into consideration by States Parties. He has also stated that the Syrian Arab Republic is making intensive efforts to prepare for, and accelerate, the transportation of chemicals, and that it is currently working on a tentative schedule for completing the transportation of chemicals.